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INFO RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 2096
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 0185
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 0195
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 0676
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 0484
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 0192
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 0351
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0567
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 2491
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1877
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO BRUSSELS BE
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP
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SUBJECT: BAISALOV WEIGHING OFFER TO JOIN PRESIDENTIAL
ADMINISTRATION

Classified By: Amb. Marie L. Yovanovitch, Reason 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Late on April 18, opposition member Edil Baisalov told SCA DAS Evan Feigenbaum that Presidential Chief of Staff Medet Sadyrkulov had asked him to join the Bakiyev administration as his deputy. According to Baisalov, Sadyrkulov told him that he would be the only deputy chief of staff, he would provide analysis and ideas, and together the two of them would make policy. Baisalov said he had not yet decided whether to accept the offer, even though Prime Minister Atambayev was pressing him to do so.

12. (C) Earlier in the evening, during a spirited dinner conversation with several Kyrgyz political figures (septel), Baisalov told DAS Feigenbaum and the other guests that even though he personally "despised" President Bakiyev, he believed that in order to avoid civil unrest, the opposition should drop its demand that Bakiyev resign and work with the government. After the other Kyrgyz guests had left, Baisalov disclosed the offer. He said that Sadyrkulov and Atambayev had told him that he was needed. Baisalov reasoned that if he accepted, it would be "another foot in the door" for the opposition, as had been Atambayev's appointment.

13. (C) Baisalov said he wanted to be of service "to the nation, not to Bakiyev," and he would not be a "lapdog" for the administration. He said he was consulting a number of people and would make a decision "soon." He worried that joining the administration would open him up to harsh criticism, and possibly present a security risk to him and his family. He said he was sending his family out of the country for the time being. (COMMENT: In fact, on April 17, Baisalov requested the Embassy provide security for him. We suggested that both Baisalov and Ambassador request GOKG security, as we had last spring following the assassination attempt, but Baisalov was concerned this would tie him too

closely to the Administration. END COMMENT.)

14. (C) COMMENT: The 29-year-old Baisalov is close to Atambayev, and we would not have been surprised if Baisalov had been offered a post in the government. Given Baisalov's very public, and at times personal, criticism of Bakiyev, however, the offer of a post inside the presidential administration is surprising. Earlier in the evening, Baisalov told two civil society leaders that by joining in the United Front's street demonstration, they were letting themselves be "used" by Felix Kulov for his own purposes. We think there's probably an element of this -- Sadyrkulov wanting to use Baisalov for his purposes -- in the offer. Without doubt, Baisalov would bring a lot of talent and energy to the position, and it is hard to imagine him as anyone's "lapdog." But Baisalov is a controversial figure in Kyrgyzstan, among the opposition and with government officials, and accepting a position in the Bakiyev administration would carry a substantial risk to his reputation and political future. This is something Baisalov is only too aware of, and it is clear the decision is a difficult one. Baisalov is now weighing whether he can, in fact, make a difference, and whether this move will torpedo his own political aspirations -- or vault them to new levels.

YOVANOVITCH